PDF Version: ARIRIAB XIV, 2011

ISSN 1343-8980

創価大学
国際仏教学高等研究所
年　報

平成２２年度
（第１４号）

Annual Report
of
The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology
at Soka University

for the Academic Year 2010

Volume XIV

創価大学・国際仏教学高等研究所
東京・2011・八王子

The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology
Soka University
Tokyo・2011

PDF Version

Four Donations Made by Maṅgalahaṃsikā, Queen of Palola (Gilgit)

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Among the altogether twelve queens of the Palola Ṣāhi dynasty, who are known at present, Queen Maṅgalahaṃsikā stands out as the most prolific donor as far as this can be estimated from surviving documents. For, she is the only queen, who donated three bronzes and participated in the donation of one manuscript.

Maṅgalahaṃsikā became first known from a brief colophon on stray folio found among the Gilgit manuscripts as published in the Facsimile Edition[1]. Most unfortunately, this isolated folio cannot be connected to any specific text with any certainty (see, however, below). Consequently, it was not known, which text exactly the queen donated together with an anonymous donor (the name is lost) and with her husband, King Vajrādityanandin. The colophon itself is fragmentary with the title of the text, to which it was attached once, being lost together with the names of other donors, who also wanted to share the merit of the donation.

As the colophon is published and discussed in "Die Palola Ṣāhis," it is sufficient to repeat only the text here for sake of convenience[2]:

> # *devadharmo yaṃ mahās(!)raddhopāsika nā + + + + + tathā sārdhaṃ paramadevi maṃgalahas(i) + + +/2/rikasya tathā sārdhaṃ śrī paṭola deva ṣāhi vajrādityanandinā tathā sārdhaṃ* [

Reading only this facsimile of poor quality, which for many years was the only source mentioning her name, led to a (mis)interpretation of the queen's name as Maṃgalahasirikā. This interpretation, however, became doubtful only once the first inscription on a pedestal of a bronze became known, where the name clearly is written Maṃgalahaṃsikā, which, moreover, in contrast to the incomprehensible Maṃgalahasirikā is easily analysed and understood.

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[1] *Gilgit Buddhist Manuscripts (Facsimile Edition)* reproduced by Raghu Vira and Lokesh Chandra. Part 10. Delhi 1974, no. 3346. — An updated survey of the publication of the Gilgit manuscripts is under peparation: O. v. Hinüber, "The Gilgit manuscripts. An Ancient Buddhist Library in Modern Research. Texts, Identifications, and Editions" to be published in P. Harrison and J.-U. Hartmann (edds.): *Indic Buddhist Manuscripts: The State of the Field.*

[2] O. v. Hinüber: *Die Palola Ṣāhis. Ihre Steininschriften, Inschriften auf Bronzen, Handschriftenkolophone und Schutzzauber. Materialien zur Geschichte von Gilgit und Chilas.* Antiquities of Northern Pakistan 5. Mainz 2004, p. 24 foll., no. 9.

ARIRIAB Vol. XIV (March 2011): 3-6
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The problem of the puzzling difference between these two forms of a name of the same person can be solved without much effort as soon as the colophon is checked again, and particularly if in addition a facsimile of better quality is compared, which became available by lucky coincidence on a set of four CD-ROMs prepared by the Rissho University (figure 1). These CD-ROMs are meant as collection of all accessible manuscripts of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra, and is as such an excellent research tool. However, by a fruitful error probably committed by the National Archives in Delhi, not only two sets microfilms of the same Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra manuscripts found at Gilgit were sent and subsequently published, but also one reel with miscellaneous manuscripts from the Gilgit library without any recognizable connection to this text[3]. The stray colophon of Maṅgalahaṃsikā as shown on this "reel no. 3" of the National Archives can be seen much clearer than in the Facsimile Edition. Although the state of preservation of the text is exactly the same as the one presented in the Facsimile Edition, one of the three reproductions on the CD-ROM is much darker and therefore allows seeing one important detail almost invisible in the previously accessible image in the Facsimile Edition. The margin of the folio turns up clearly and, still more important, a gap of three missing *akṣara*s can be recognized at the end of first line of the two lines colophon[4]. After this small, but decisive progress it is fortunately not too difficult fill the gap in *maṃgalahasi* + + + /line 2/*rikasya* by inserting *maṃgalaha*[*ṃ*]*si*[*kā bhaṭā*]*rikasya* when the evidence from a better image is combined with the inscriptions on bronzes. Once the name of the queen is established in this form, it fits well into the onomastic system in use in Kashmir, where personal names containing the elements *maṅgala* and *haṃsa* occur, e.g., in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, however not in this combination[5].

Moreover, the correct reading of the colophon throws some new light on the title of Queen Maṅgalahaṃsikā. So far, she is the only queen who reached the position of a *paramadevī ... bhaṭārikā*, which seems to be the highest rank for a queen of the Palola Ṣāhis[6]. The masculine ending *-asya* used with the feminine word *bhaṭārikā* does not pose any problem as parallels from the various colophons in the Gilgit manuscripts

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[3] CD-ROM III contains first National Archives Reel 3 (filmed in 1952; an exact date 31/5/52 is found on CD-ROM III, no. 021.14.008) with the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* manuscripts serial nos. 44, 45, 47 of the Gilgit collection and, in addition, serial no. 62 "Cūrṇa," i.e. miscellaneous small fragments (= FE 10 nos. 3367, 3368). Then follow again facsimiles of the same *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* manuscripts only, however filmed later in 1968 "for Prof. P. V. Bapat." Four identical copies of the colophon together with *Samghātasūtra* folio 62a of manuscript F under different exposure are reproduced on the CD-ROM III (nos. 021.14.006, 021.14.007, 021.14.009, 021.14.010) followed by the empty verso of the colophon folio (no. 021.14.011).

[4] After the fragmentary colophon as given above the text breaks off and the rest of the folio is empty. The upper margin of the folio is damaged. Therefore the superscripts partly lost.

[5] A. Hilka: *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der indischen Namengebung: Die altindischen Personennamen*. Indische Forschungen 3. Heft. Breslau 1910, p. 133 "b) Glück und Segen," on *maṅgala*; M. A. Stein: *Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇī. A Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir*. London 1900 (Translation vol. II, index) on *haṃsa*. — A queen of the successor to Vajrādityanandi is called Tora-haṃsikā (a sister of Maṅgala-haṃsikā?) and a later queen of the Palola Ṣāhis Maṅgala-kesarī.

[6] On the titles of queens cf. *Palola Ṣāhis*, as note 2 above, p. 116, and p. 130 for this title also used by queens from Kangra during the 7th century. — The improved reading of the colophon also rules out that °-*haṃsikā* might be part of a title as assumed in O. v. Hinüber: Three New Bronzes from Gilgit. *ARIRIAB* 10. 2007, pp. 39-43, particularly p. 42.

demonstrate[7].

In addition, the arrangement of the folios as microfilmed and published on the Rissho CD-ROM might through new light also on the colophon and indicate to which manuscript it could have belonged once[8]. For, in contrast to the Facsimile Edition, where the colophon is placed next to a folio written in a different script and of different seize, which rules out any connection, it is found on the CD-ROM accompanied by folio no. 62 of the *Saṃghāṭasūtra* manuscript F. As far as this can be determined at present by using only a photo (which is not without hazards), the respective measurements of both folios seem to match. Therefore, it is perhaps not totally impossible that, if the position of both these folios next to each other is not purely accidental, the colophon might indeed belong to this manuscript thus dating it to the time of Vajrādityanandin, who might have ruled during the period AD 585-605[9] Consequently, if this assumption should prove to be correct after checking the respective originals, manuscript F of the Saṃghāṭasūtra might have been copied two to three decades earlier than manuscript D, which can be dated to AD 627/8[10].

Besides this colophon, two inscriptions on bronzes donated by queen Queen Maṅgalahaṃsikā were published in an earlier issue of this journal[11]. For sake of convenience, the respective texts are repeated here.

On the pedestal of the bronze showing the image of a Prajñāpāramitā Queen Maṅgalahaṃsikā writes:

 # deyadharmo yaṃ paramadevyā śrī maṅgalahaṃsikāyā

Only the pedestal of a second bronze survives, which is in the possession of the Rubin Museum of Art in New York[12]:

 # svasti deyadharmo yaṃ śrī paramadevī maṅgalahaṃsikayā tathā sārdhaṃ śrī paṭola deva ṣāha vajrādityanandinā tathā sārdhaṃ śrī torabhaṭārikāyā: ‖ tathā sārdhaṃ mahāgaṃjapati rāṇāvīrasya:

In both instances, the queen obviously acts as the principal donor. Recently, a third image with an inscription came to light[13]. According to information kindly provided

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[7] Cf. *Palola Ṣāhis*, as note 2 above, p. 17, colophon no. 6: (6) *devyā* ... °*puṇyena* and (7) *mātunā namasuthena*.

[8] The sequence of folios as shown in the Facsimile Edition differs from that on the Rissho CD-ROM. A third and again different sequence of folios is found on a microfilm prepared for the author in 1967, where the colophon is placed next to folio 14 of the *Mahāpratisarāvidyārājñī*, no. 3334 of FE.

[9] These dates are, however, estimated only, cf. *Palola Ṣāhis*, as note 2 above, p. 98 foll.

[10] Cf. *Palola Ṣāhis*, as note 2 above, p. 31. In February 2011 Dr. N. Kudo, Soka University, was kind enough to take photos of folio 62 measuring 25,6 by 7.5 cm and of the colophon folio in the same frame, which allows comparison. Although the size of both folios differ marginally, it seems very likely that the colophon indeed belongs to the Samghatasutra, although a slight doubt remains

[11] In "Three New Bronzes," as note 6 above.

[12] An image of this is published in *ARIRIAB* 12. 2009, pp. 3-6, plate 6.

[13] Including this new bronze altogether nine pieces with inscriptions confirming a king or a queen of the Palola Ṣāhis as the donor are known. A tenth bronze is donated by a member of the Bhagadatta family

by Fabio Rossi of Rossi and Rossi, London, who also drew my attention to this piece and consented to its publication, a recently deceased private collector originally acquired this image about fifty years ago by (figure 2). The height of the image, which is made of brass (copper and zinc alloy) with inlaid silver eyes and copper lips, is 24,8 cm according to a communication by John Guy, curator of South and Southeast Asian Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art[14].

The inscription is easily read and understood (figure 3):

1. # *devadharmo yaṃ śrī paramadevi*
2. *yā maṃgalahaṃsikayā a*
3. *yaṃ devadhaṃmaṃ kārāpitaṃ*

"This is the pious gift of Śrī Paramadevī Maṅgalahaṃsikā, this pious gift was ordered to be made by Śrī Paramadevī Maṅgalahaṃsikā."

The wording of the inscription is unusual in more than one respect. In contrast to *deya-dharma* in the dedicatory inscriptions of both the bronzes previously known, here *deva-*° is written twice as in the colophon discussed above. Moreover, the variation *devadharmo* and Middle Indic *devadhammaṃ* is so far singular. The phrasing also differs from common practice, because the word *devadharma* occurs twice resulting in a slightly awkward syntax. For, the instrumental *maṃgalahaṃsikayā* obviously also meant to be understood as a genitive in combination with *devadharmo yaṃ* can, and probably should, be read twice following the *kākākṣigolakanyāya*: "The pious gift of ... was ordered by ..." Moreover, the sequence of words in the ungrammatical text *ayaṃ* (instead of *idaṃ*) *devadhammaṃ* is remarkable, because the pronoun is regularly placed after the substantive otherwise. Instead of the causative *kārāpita* the simple verb *kṛta* is commonly used[15].

This Buddha is the second donation made by Queen Maṅgalahaṃsikā alone, which is also dated to the time, when her husband ruled, that is to the very early seventh century. Her activity is therefore quite remarkable and surpasses that of all other queens as far as this is mirrored in the extant material. At the same time, only she bears the very high title *paramadevī ... bhaṭārikā* "highest queen ... great lady," which is never again used by any other queen of the dynasty. This is in stark contrast to the modest titles of her husband, who is only a plain *śrī paṭola deva ṣāhi* in comparison to the grand, if not pompous title used by his successors *mahārājādhirāja parameśvara paṭola deva ṣāhi śrī*[16]. It is, however, at present not possible to interpret this observation, which seems to point to an exceptional position of Queen Maṅgalahaṃsikā.

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ruling Palola.

[14] It is my pleasant obligation to thank both gentlemen for their kind assistance.

[15] On the structure of this formula cf. *Palola Ṣāhis*, as note 2 above, p. 180 foll.

[16] Cf. the table in *Palola Ṣāhis*, as note 2 above, p. 108 foll.